

Cost House (Hitt House)  
Keedysville Road  
Sharpsburg Vicinity  
Washington County  
Maryland

HABS NO. MD-957

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PHOTOGRAPHS AND  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

COST HOUSE (HITT HOUSE)

HABS NO. MD-957

Location: East of Keedysville Road, Sharpsburg Vicinity,  
Washington County, Maryland

Significance: This building is significant as an example of  
vernacular log construction and for its proximity  
to the Civil War Battle of Antietam.

Description: The Cost or Hitt House is located on the east side  
of the Keedysville Road just east of Antietam  
Creek. It is situated on gently sloping ground and  
is a two and one-half-story, five-bay log dwelling  
set on low fieldstone foundations. Attached to its  
south gable wall is a two-story, four-bay wing.  
The windows of both section have very wide frames  
with quarter round trim. The main entrance is  
located in the center bay of the main block's west  
front elevation. It is framed similarly to the  
windows and holds a door with six raised panels  
under a simple four-light transom. A second door  
in the main section is located in the center bay of  
the east or rear elevation. This main entrance is  
sheltered by a small front gabled porch. Doors in  
the south wing are located in the front and rear  
elevations. The side gabled roof is punctuated by  
three interior chimneys, one at each gable end of  
the main section, and one on the south gable end of  
the addition.

History: This house was originally owned by Robert Smith,  
one of a prominent early family in Washington  
County and a member of the state Legislature. It  
is believed to have been built in the late 18th or  
very early 19th century, and thus is an important  
example of early log houses in this area. In  
1818, upon Smith's death, his grand nephew, Samuel  
Hitt, was given both this house and the mill area  
across the street. (see Pry's Mill, HABS NO. MD-  
958) Hitt was descended from a family who helped  
to establish Methodism in Maryland and the United  
States. On August 17, 1846, Samuel M. Hitt and his  
wife Barbara sold their farm to Samuel Cost. The  
farm remained in the Cost family until 1886 when  
Jacob H. Cost sold it to Jacob C. and Barbara A.  
Rohrer. It was held by the Rohrer family until  
1945.

Samuel Cost owned this farm during the Battle of  
Antietam which occurred on September 17, 1862. In  
addition to having numerous Federal troops  
stationed in the area and being at a major crossing

point of Antietam Creek, the Cost house and barn were also used as hospitals during and after the Battle. On the eve of the Battle, September 16, General J.K.F. Mansfield dined at the Cost house. After the Battle the farm served briefly as headquarters for General Meade.

Sources: Hitt House, Cost House, Maryland Historical Trust  
Inventory Form for State Historic Sites Survey,  
April, 1976

Historian: Martha Wagner  
HABS  
1991